

Meeting **JOINT COMMITTEE ON STRATEGIC PLANNING AND TRANSPORT**

Date **10 SEPTEMBER 2010** Agenda item number

From **JOINT OFFICER STEERING GROUP**

**DERBY CITY, DERBYSHIRE, NOTTINGHAM CITY, NOTTINGHAMSHIRE
LOCAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP (LEP)**

1. Summary

1.1 Nottingham and Derby City Councils and Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire County Councils have agreed to seek approval to establish a LEP. The government is expected to announce a decision in September.

2. Background

2.1 The Government is offering local areas the opportunity to take control of their future economic development. LEPs will be partnerships between local authorities and businesses and will play a key role in promoting local economic development - to replace Regional Development Agencies ie the East Midlands Development Agency (emda) in the region.

2.2 LEPs will be a key vehicle in delivering Government objectives for economic growth, decentralisation and helping to rationalise the regional tier, whilst also providing a means for local authorities to work together with business in order to quicken the economic recovery.

2.4 The Government issued a letter to all Leaders and Chief Executives of local authorities on 29 June 2010 inviting them to work with Government to help strengthen local economies. The Government asked for outline proposals from partnerships to form LEPs, no later than 6 September 2010.

2.5. Based upon the letter, sent by Vince Cable and Eric Pickles, in which they invite local authorities to come forward with proposals to establish a LEP, they state that functions for LEPs could include strategic leadership to set out local economic priorities in their areas, planning, housing, local transport and infrastructure priorities, employment and enterprise, low carbon economy and supporting small business start ups. Tourism could also be a LEP function in areas which it is an important economic driver.

3. Derby City, Derbyshire, Nottingham City, Nottinghamshire LEP

- 3.1 The Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire sub-region has a complex and inextricably linked economic and social geography, and shares many defining characteristics. Commercial, academic and transport linkages are very strong and important.
- 3.2 The good working relationship and partnership approach in the sub-region have been at the heart of many past regeneration successes and the partners welcome the opportunity to develop this further through a LEP.
- 3.3 The LEP will be a private sector led partnership that will include the following functions within its remit :
 - Enterprise, innovation and sector support
 - Inward investment and trade
 - Promotion and tourism
 - Employment and skills
 - Infrastructure and planning, including housing
- 3.4. It will aim to create the conditions for future economic prosperity and resilience by harnessing our economic power and complementary strengths through:
 - Building on shared advantages in internationally competitive science, manufacturing, engineering and creative industries, to drive productivity growth as we develop a low carbon economy.
 - Developing our distinctive cultural, leisure, sport and tourism offer to world class standards.
 - Ensuring that the benefits of sustainable economic growth are shared across our cities, towns and rural communities.
 - Developing a skills programme, building on the strengths and reputation of our first rate FE and HE sector, that will meet and drive up employers' current and future skills demands.
 - Continuing to secure investment in regeneration and infrastructure projects to stimulate private sector growth.
- 3.5 The LEP Board will set the strategic business context for and co-ordinate the alignment between planning, transportation and other major infrastructure provision, including digital. It will be the mechanism for capturing business requirements and give an economic perspective on whether the focus of relevant Local Investment Plans, Local Transport Plans and Local Development Frameworks will maximise the achievement of their economic objectives and associated growth priorities and best level private sector investment.
- 3.5 The responsibility for delivery of strategic infrastructure and site development will remain with county, city and district councils. Democratic accountability must remain a key tenet of planning and the

Board will not assume or seek to assume the statutory responsibility of local authorities. Our partnership will provide the necessary evidence to inform the preparation of core strategies and local transport and other investment plans. It will encourage alignment of these, inform resource deployment across the area and could seek to inform future growth nodes and associated infrastructure improvements. The partnership is expected to have an influential role in pan-LEP decisions affecting transport and other infrastructure issues, including through working with bodies such as the Highways Agency and Environment Agency.

- 3.6 The LEP welcomes the opportunity to engage with DfT to identify national transport infrastructure priorities. It will continually promote sustainable transport solutions to deliver the transition to a low carbon economy. The partnership will also take a role in influencing the prioritisation between neighbouring partnerships and with Government over, for instance, planning for airport expansions, major rail infrastructure investments and future road programmes, including the existing business priorities of the Midland Mainline. The partnership will want to promote quickly the improvement of the scope and capacity of existing broadband infrastructure.
- 3.7. With regard to housing growth in particular, existing structures involving the Homes and Communities Agency and district councils are working well in coordinating separate elements of local and wider policy. The LEP would wish to build on existing approaches as it recognises the importance of democratic accountability and variances in local infrastructure requirements. However, the LEP will look at scope for the Board to have an overview of the development and implementation of Local Investment Plans in consultation with the HCA, within a strategic framework underpinned by a strong evidence base. The partnership provides an opportunity for business advice to and greater alignment between local authorities, co-ordinating and endorsing Local Investment Plans.
- 3.8. To maximise success the LEP wants a transparent route to make a case for our pressing investment priorities, accompanied by the financial tools required to sustain investment. There are existing improvements that the LEP wants Government to prioritise, along with improved coverage and capacity of digital infrastructure.
- 3.8 The proposal states that it is the intention to acquire the use of strategic sites that could be used for economic development or employment purposes. As the Board may not have any formal legal status, it is proposed that any assets which are transferred from the RDA would be held by the County, City, District Councils or other local organisations. The proposal requests further discussions with Government over the transfer of key strategic sites that would have maximum development potential at minimum cost.

3.9 The LEP has the support of major businesses and representative organisations and the universities. The business case has been finalised and was submitted by the 6th September deadline. The detailed form and function of the LEP will develop over time.

4. Recommendation

4.1 It is recommended that the Committee note the report

5. Background Papers referred to in compiling this report

5.1 The Government letter to Leaders and Chief Executives on 29.6.10.

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